

Matthew was seated on the Board, they worked together for District I. Bishop Love closed by saying Matthew was his friend and a partner in the ministry as well. Mr. Benjie Forrest commented that Matthew touched many lives in this county and eastern North Carolina as seen by the attendance at his visitation at the church. He added that Matthew's spirit is with us; and that his being a man of great character was an example instilled in young people. Mr. Sean Kenny thanked Ms. Ward for sharing Matthew with us and added that he knows his church feels the same. He stated that we are a better Board and people because of knowing Matthew. Mr. Kenny closed by stating that Matthew was a positive male role model for others. Ms. Christine Waters stated that she had attended the New Board Member Conference 101 with Matthew and Sean and shared his passion to serve on the Board. She added that his noble purpose bridged all the gaps in schools, the Board and the community. Mr. Marc Whichard echoed all that has been said and stated Matthew was a really good person. He added that he and Matthew were in the hospital at the same time and while he was there, Matthew had Ms. Ward checking up on his health status. Mr. Whichard closed saying he was better off for knowing Matthew. Mr. Worth Forbes stated that he and Matthew had worked together at Ayden Middle School, and also that Matthew had invited him to preach at his church. After speaking at Matthew's wake, he knew it was important to say good things to someone before tragedy intervenes and he wished Matthew could hear all that is being said tonight. He spoke to Ms. Ward stating that we need to remember her and her family from this point forward and ended by stating that Matthew not only saved kids, but also their souls. Chair Peaden expressed to Ms. Ward that he truly enjoyed them coming to eat at his place of business as Matthew loved those pork chops. He also shared that Matthew had called him to the hospital and said how much he loved being on the Board and his family. Ms. Edna Ward, Dr. Ward's wife, was presented Dr. Ward's Board of Education Name Plate and a red rose by Chair Peaden, Vice-Chair Ralph Love and Superintendent Emory. Mrs. Ward expressed her thanks to the Board for all they had done to honor Matthew. There was a standing ovation during the presentation.

Chair Peaden then offered the Agenda for consideration. Mr. Benjie Forrest moved, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, that the Agenda be amended to include under New Business, Item A. Mr. Michael Cowin Will Update the Board Following a Meeting with the County Manager Regarding the Budget. Item B. North Carolina State Board of Education Member Jean Woolard Will Present a Short Briefing to the Board. Motion was unanimous.

No one signed up to speak during Public Expression

Under Spotlight on Teaching and Learning, Assistant Superintendent of Finance Michael Cowin shared with the Board that in 2008, the Finance Committee was told in a review of the audit that the Child Nutrition Department lost over one million dollars for Pitt County Schools. He stated that a list of recommendations to correct the deficit was developed and implemented with the result being recouping these dollars and more. With over 200 Child Nutrition employees throughout our schools, Mr. Cowin stated that Child Nutrition Director Leann Seelman does a great job and may even beat him at being "tight with a dollar". Mr. Cowin informed the Board that making good use of USDA commodities, closely watching employees monthly and serving three million plus meals a year have helped the Department's budget resources.

Ms. Seelman came forward to give the highlights of the Child Nutrition Program stating that Pitt County Schools is known to have a well-run program throughout the state, and she's proud to be a part of this district. Several Programs the CND is involved with includes: National School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, After School Snack Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and Summer Feeding Program. She also stated that the Department caters outside meals to agencies including the Juvenile Detention Center, various day care facilities and Head Start providers, and the Greenville Homeless Shelter; and is responsible for all vending in Pitt County Schools. With more than 14,200 students qualifying for free and reduced-price meals, Ms. Seelman commented the Summer Feeding Program provides food insufficiencies that some economically disadvantaged children experience during the summer break. She explained the Federal regulations on calories, total fat, vitamins and other specific areas and what staff is on board to meet the nutritional demands of the CND programs. Ms. Seelman discussed Taste Explorers and the Local Student Wellness Policy. She stated new standards for foods and menu options offered in the schools were released in January 2012; adding that our district already meets many of the standards but may experience some challenges related to the new meal pattern regarding portion sizes and limiting some foods that are typically favored by students. In closing, Ms. Seelman informed the Board that the CND now participates in a state-wide purchasing alliance which provides leverage to purchase grocery and supply items at a significant savings. The NC Alliance gives the Department the security of participating in a bid that meets all the USDA requirements for procurement.

Under Consent Items, Bishop Ralph Love, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, moved that the Board approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting held January 23, 2012 and the Personnel Report for February 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

Under New Business, Mr. Cowin presented an overview following meetings with county government over the last several days. He added he could not stress enough how fortunate we are that our county government and commissioners value education and support us as we struggle with the economy. Mr. Cowin shared that the County in the current fiscal year has a shortfall of \$1.2 million following a reduction in budgeted revenues. In the past, the county has relied on fund balances, but this balance is maintained at a specific level. Departmental distributions will now have to be reduced, and for Pitt County Schools, this is a cut in our local budget amounting to \$387,500 this fiscal year. In a meeting earlier today, the County Commissioners told the County Manager to do what is necessary to balance the budget for this year. Mr. Cowin stated he will meet with Superintendent Emory and discuss what we need to do to prepare for this budget cut and share a recommendation with the Finance Committee.

Mr. Cowin stated he's now considering what impact these reduced revenues will have for the 2012-13 fiscal year. The County Manager also informed Mr. Cowin and Dr. Emory that this reduction in budget revenue leads them to a projected shortfall of \$6.3 million for the next fiscal year. Not only is there reduced revenue for the county, but he explained that recent property re-evaluations are lower with at least a 4% reduction in the value of property. The current property tax rate is 66 ½ cents. Property tax revenues are the primary source for funding the operation of Pitt County Schools. Mr. Cowin commented that if the County approves a budget neutral plan, it

will mean raising the property tax rate by 3% for a total rate of 69 ½ cents to balance the decreased property evaluation, and we will still have a potential reduction in our county appropriation of between \$500,000-\$1 million for school year 2012-13. If their budget is not budget neutral with this decrease in revenue, PCS will receive a \$1 million plus deficit in our local budget for next year.

Mr. Cowin discussed other budget cuts we've experienced from the State and what that meant to our district this year with a known \$1.2 million reduction already in place for fiscal year 2013-13. He informed the Board that County funding is reflected in the formula used to establish Low Wealth Funds. This school year we received approximately \$6 million in Low Wealth Funds, which was used entirely for 140 instructional teaching positions (regular education teachers, AG teachers, EC teachers, CTE teachers).

Mr. Cowin stated he plans to talk to the folks at DPI this week seeking several scenarios of what could happen with the budget. He added that we have done a great job in managing budget reductions over the last three to four years with County Commissioner support. Mr. Cowin informed the Board that he will work with the Finance Committee to determine the direction we need to go.

Superintendent Emory commented to the Board that we may be looking at a temporary freeze in certain areas for non-essential personnel. She stated that we need to move quickly in solving this issue.

Mr. Benjie Forrest stated he knew this was not our budget being discussed, but the county's; and wondered if new growth has been looked at by the county. Mr. Cowin responded that he is not privy to that information.

Ms. Jill Camnitz wanted to be sure she understands a revenue neutral decision that could be made by the county. She stated that if property re-evaluations go down, revenues go down because tax on the property is less. If the tax rate is increased, this will offset the decreased property tax. Mr. Cowin responded that this is correct, adding that citizens will not pay more taxes but pay approximately the same amount – just in a different method.

For the second item of New Business, Mr. Benjie Forrest introduced State Board of Education Member Jean Woolard stating she represents Pitt County as well as 17 counties in north eastern North Carolina. Having taught for 31 years, she is a champion for education and students. Ms. Woolard stated she was appointed by the Governor and meets once a month for two days with other State Board of Education members. She commented that she constantly reminds the members that rural areas of North Carolina, with their budget being a big issue because of the very low tax base, are not anything like the metropolitan regions. Ms. Woolard added that many members of the General Assembly do not understand the impact that budget cuts have across the state regarding education; and while they lift the cap on the number of charter schools allowed, they do not realize the budget cuts for public education are made worse. She informed the Board that she's open and will listen to problems, i.e. Board Member Jennifer Little had contacted her in reference to the travel distance for schools to play sports set by the NCHSAA. Understanding the amount of instructional time these athletes lose due to travel time required, she stated she talked with State

Superintendent June Atkinson who appointed her to serve as the DPI representative on the realignment committee for the next restructuring of athletics in North Carolina. Ms. Woolard shared information regarding the Northeast Regional High School of Agriscience and Biotechnology, which she knows has been supported by our Board. She feels it's imperative that rural students have the same opportunities as students who live in metropolitan areas, but stated some rural counties do not even have internet access so computers sent home with students from school are useless. She added that global access across the state should be available to all students and described her endeavors to make this happen.

Chair Ralph Love asked Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Delilah Jackson to present the proposed 2012-13 School Calendar for First Reading and give an overview of dates. Ms. Jackson explained to the Board that DPI has not responded to the requested waiver presented several meetings earlier involving the State mandated five additional instructional days. Therefore, we have moved forward with presenting the calendar with the additional five instructional school days included and a schedule of dates for early release, and end of the 9-week and 6-week periods. She commented that there are a few teacher workdays before school starts with the remainder at the end of school and none during the school year. Ms. Jackson reminded the Board that according to legislative decisions, students cannot start school until August 25 which is on Saturday this year, so the beginning date for students would be August 27, and end by June 10. She pointed out changes in the December break schedule and discussed the six Early Release days.

Mr. Worth Forbes mentioned the requested waiver regarding the five added instructional days which could be used for teachers to work in their classrooms. Ms. Jackson stated four days had been asked for in the waiver which would be used for professional development for the Common Core and Essential Standards Program, but a decision regarding the waiver has not been made by the State.

Mr. Marc Whichard stated that with the first semester for high schools ending in January, there are no workdays available for teachers to work on grades and preparing for second semester to begin. He voiced a desire for teachers to have an Early Release day each month and discussed possibly two in January back to back. Ms. Jackson responded that this has been discussed. Mr. Whichard added that the calendar is horrible for teachers and encouraged parents to contact legislators letting them know they are missing work to accommodate changes made due to the extra days. He stressed that everyone contacts the legislators and tell them the calendar parameters are too tight.

Ms. Christine Waters commented that the marking periods are not proportional with second semester having more days. Ms. Jackson stated this factor was due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Mr. Sean Kenny reiterated Mr. Whichard's concerns. He also commented that he could not vote for a calendar that had students attending school on Good Friday.

Ms. Jill Camnitz expressed this being a horrible calendar for students and staff.

Superintendent Emory added that teachers are at a breaking point. She stated that if the Board agrees, Early Release days will be added for each month (some may be back-to-back), and changes will be brought back to the Board for Second Reading.

Again Mr. Whichard voiced that the legislators need to revisit the start and end dates for the school year as the parameters are too tight currently for the staff to have any working room with the school calendar. He feels the Board needs to send a Resolution regarding the calendar to our legislators with Chair Peaden reminding everyone that a Resolution has already been sent.

Ms. Jennifer Little asked would two half days in January help the high school teachers.

Mr. Worth Forbes feels an Early Release day each month and students out on Good Friday need to be placed in the calendar.

Ms. Christine Waters asked with the exam schedule for one-half day, could the second half of the day be used for teacher work days, possibly on Thursday and Friday, though she understands remediation will be occurring Thursday.

Ms. Jackson informed the Board with no make-up days built in the calendar (previously teacher workdays), make-up days due to inclement weather will be made up on Saturdays. If more days are needed, holidays will be looked at.

Chair Marc Whichard introduced Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programs and Services Cheryl Olmsted who informed the Board that the State of North Carolina accepted Federal money for the Race to the Top Program, and that's why the State extended the instructional days of school from 180 to 185. She asked Race to the Top Coordinator Tom Feller to update the EPS Committee regarding the training being rolled out for teachers involving the Common Core and Essential Standards. As background, Ms. Olmsted informed the Board that 48 states are involved in the new standards for Common Core for Math and English/Language Arts and Essential Standards for all other subjects. Essentially, we are stating that we are going to redo and have new standards for every subject at every grade level by next year. At the same time, the agreement was that we will have extended days, thus 180 days went to 185 days. Then, new assessments are being implemented for these new standards which will be field tested in May. At the same time, teachers now have to report their performance to DPI. Ms. Olmsted explained that teachers are in the midst of these changes right now, and their stress level is greatly increased – plus there is the added factor of budget constraints. She stated training started with a group of 13 people, next principals and instructional coaches were brought in and then Professional Learning Communities (PLC) were formed to train teachers to work in small groups or teams to look at standards and curriculum to create lesson plans. The teams were working in a “balloon” pattern with help for knowing the new materials, help with understanding the knowledge, and then applying what they've learned in their classrooms. Ms. Olmsted added that standards are now being looked at with field tests hopefully coming out in May. In June, new pacing guides will be created for Common Core and Essential Standards. In July, we have asked DPI to work with us in rolling out the entire plan in the fall.

Ms. Jill Camnitz asked are all teachers involved with Ms. Olmsted responding yes, stating the larger schools have started meeting as teams and we are combining smaller schools to create teams to discuss the new standards and curriculum and see what's different than before. Next year, they will be able to process lesson plans to include literacy and technology as mandated, as well as assessments. She added that folks who are well oriented to the process will develop pacing guides this summer for total content including literacy and technology. Ms. Camnitz asked with all these aspects being changed, why we are in such a hurry to get the new process in place. Ms. Olmsted stated with all the states involved, some have decided to make one or two standards at the time; but North Carolina has decided to implement all changes in one year. She did state that a leadership team is coming from Statesville to talk about the process and what should be placed in pacing guides; then we will meet with our folks to set some directives. Ms. Olmsted stated we are going step by step in this process in each group; and added that in looking at the pacing guides and studying different areas, we are checking to see how different subjects can relate, i.e. social studies and language arts.

Mr. Worth Forbes stated it's important that principals send the right teachers to begin work on their pacing guides this summer and that the pacing guides are as strong as they can be to help with the development of the lesson plans. Central office staff and administrators have to understand and be flexible next year due to the short turn-around for teachers, and realize it will be a learning year for days ahead. Ms. Olmsted stated schedules have been made for them to have common planning time as it takes time to create all this.

Mr. Marc Whichard commented that all states were tripping over themselves to apply for the Race to the Top money due to the budget shortfalls and this was a way to sure up your state's education budget. He feels strongly that this is no "golden egg" and North Carolina made a tremendous mistake by accepting Race to the Top and Common Core. Mr. Whichard feels the parameters for this are much too fast and too tight. He feels that our older veteran teachers are leaving because of all the changes, and our younger teachers will be burned out with such tight parameters and horrific working conditions. He added with new curriculum changes, teachers have to spend more time for preparation, and they are already coming in early, then teaching their classes, and staying after hours to get everything done. Mr. Whichard closed by saying this is no gift, but quite the contrary.

Ms. Jean Woolard commented that she had been hearing about these changes in working for the State Board of Education, but she's never heard it described better than what Ms. Olmsted shared tonight. She said the Feds offer you money with many strings attached and move too fast. Ms. Woolard added that there have been no raises in three years, and veteran teachers will give up in despair. She said that we have to have faith in our teachers and once this process is aligned, students in all states will be on the same plan. Ms. Woolard ended by saying she will be praying for our teachers in this process.

Superintendent Emory commented the new standards will be rolled out in the 2012-13 school year with the assessments rolling out in the 2013-14 school year. She suggested hosting meetings in our schools so that the Board may have the opportunity to thank teachers personally for all they do.

Ms. Olmsted shared with the Board the SADLS Program implemented by DPI and Legislature. She stated that in 1997, North Carolina passed a law giving districts the right to revoke a student's driver's license if that student is not making adequate academic progress or dropping out of school. Ms. Olmsted added that this had been hard to enforce because if a student left a school, there was no way to know where that student went. Now, with NC WISE in place, all counties are connected, and we know if a student has enrolled in another school. With our dropout rate improving though still behind the State average, and the SIG grant in place in three high schools, it seems we should be using the legislation we have in place to enact this process. A student has to pass three out of four classes to keep their driver's license. If not, we send a letter to the Driver's License System for their license to be revoked. If a student drops out from this day forward, we will follow the same process. Student behavior is another factor in a student losing his/her driver's license if one of the following occurs – possession of an alcoholic beverage or illegal controlled substance, carrying a firearm or weapon on campus or assaulting a teacher/staff member.

Ms. Olmsted informed the Board that 105 students will receive letters Monday. She added that 54 students dropped out of school first semester, but they will not be sent a letter as this process was not in place last semester. Ms. Olmsted stated that a letter of hardship will be considered by panel consisting of an administrator from each high school, Mr. Ron Butler and Mr. Darrel Gregory; and if the hardship is approved, the hardship will be granted forever. If the student is not granted a hardship, an Appeals Committee has been formed to include Student Services Director Pokie Noland, 9-12 Director David Jenkins and herself. This hardship process will be held twice a year. Mr. Whichard stated that in his position as a high school principal in another district, due to the poor economy, some students don't have their driver's license so this process cannot be applied. Superintendent Emory added that parents had received letters over the last year explaining to them that if this law was being enacted, their child would be having their license revoked, so this action should not come as a surprise. Ms. Olmsted thanked Student Services Director Pokie Noland, Athletic Director Ron Butler and SADLS Administrator Darrel Gregory for their hard work and effort on this project.

Superintendent Emory began discussion involving the proposed Unitary Status Plan. She shared the timeline and stated that the plan will be given to each Board member tonight after being reviewed by legal counsel. Dr. Emory asked the Board to study the draft for any questions or changes as it will be presented for second reading at our February 20th Board meeting. She also shared that Attorney Ken Soo will come for a Closed Session in March to discuss strategies of the Plan. Superintendent Emory posed a question in moving forward, do we appear before Judge Howard stating we believe we have achieved Unitary Status and here's why, or here is our data and plan – do you feel we have reached Unitary Status. She stated that our staff inched along building from the ground up in retrieving this information and did not hire an outside firm to pull this together. Dr. Emory commented that In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg did extensive research across the country on how other systems achieved Unitary Status. Currently, we are revising data to update the Unitary Status book to include this past school year's information.

Superintendent Emory informed the Board that for each criterion listed, there will be a narrative, identified concerns and strategies with measures given. She stated that some sections will have little information as we are not running dual or segregated systems, i.e. facility services or transportation. In student achievement and student services, we are working to close the gap and improve overall performance. Dr. Emory commented that we don't have 40 years worth of data, but in most areas 10 years of data is available. In March and part of April, we are planning public sessions for community input as we make the Plan available for feedback. Once this has been completed, we will make revisions as deemed necessary and bring the Plan back to the Board with the addition of this school year's data. Attorney Soo mentioned possibly taking the data, if completed, back to Court before the December deadline if the Board so chooses.

Chair Peaden discussed the Board Retreat held January 25, 2012 and recommended that the Board approve the Consensus Items listed by NCSBA Attorney Allison Schafer at the end of the Retreat. Bishop Ralph Love moved, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, that the Board approve the Consensus Items List as described. Motion was unanimous.

Chair Peaden moved to the next item under New Business which involved the vacancy for District I, Seat A. He asked Attorney Sonnenberg to address the Board regarding current policy/ documents in place. Attorney Sonnenberg discussed Session Law 1987-193, By-Laws 1.104 and Appendix 1.301-A. He commented that the Appendix was suspended by the Board following Mr. Michael Dixon's death with the decision to appoint a new Board Member being brought before the full Board and not just those members sitting in "A" Seats as stated in the Appendix. Superintendent Emory informed the Board that during that period, the Board was in the process of student reassignment and this issue presented an urgency to fill the District 1, Seat A vacancy. Mr. Benjie Forrest moved, second by Bishop Ralph Love, that Appendix 1.301-A be suspended at this time so that the full Board will be present in making a decision to fill District I, Seat A. Ms. Jill Camnitz asked why we should suspend our own procedures unless there was a real reason to do so. Mr. Forrest responded that he wanted the full Board to work together in this decision. Mr. Worth Forbes stated that the process worked well before with Dr. Ward and the public was invited. Ms. Camnitz commented that the subcommittee meetings are open to the public also, and the subcommittee could make a recommendation to the full Board for a final vote. She suggested that if we are not going to follow our procedure, perhaps we need to discuss the procedure and make changes.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated that he knows of three times we have asked to suspend this Appendix, and perhaps we need to make a change in this procedure. Ms. Barbara Owens stated she remembers two times this Appendix was suspended with Mr. Kenny responding that it was suspended when Dr. Ward was first elected to fill Mr. Dixon's seat, when he was reappointed in December 2010 to serve until the next Board of Education election in 2014, and now, we are asking for a suspension tonight. Ms. Christine Waters stated the first time was a sense of urgency, the second time was the nature of Dr. Ward and wanting to keep him on the Board; but tonight, she feels we should not suspend the procedure in place.

Ms. Jennifer Little commented that if we suspend the Appendix, then all Board members will be present at all interviews of all candidates regardless of the Seat. Is this correct, with the response being yes.

Chair Peaden then asked for a vote by the Board stating if you vote yes, you are approving that all Board members should be present during the interviewing and decision making for all applicants who apply for District 1, Seat A. Those voting no were: Ms. Jill Camnitz, Ms. Christine Waters and Ms. Barbara Owens. Those in favor of the motion were: Ms. Jennifer Little, Ms. Mary Williams, Chair Billy Peaden, Bishop Ralph Love, Mr. Sean Kenny, Mr. Marc Whichard, Mr. Benjie Forrest and Mr. Worth Forbes. Motion passed.

Under Unfinished Business, Chair Worth Forbes and In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg asked for a Second Reading of new and revised policies, which were brought before the Board at our last meeting including:

Policy 10.612 (new) – Service Animals in School

Policy 4.103 (revised) – Crowd Control at School Sponsored Activities

Policy 7.005 (revised) – Professional Development

Policy 7.014 (revised) – Conflict of Interest

Policy 7.107 (revised) – Re-Employment Probationary Period

Policy 7.110 (revised) – Plans for Growth and Improvement of Licensed Employees

Policy 7.111 (revised) – Evaluation of Certified Employees

Policy 7.120 (revised) – Teacher Planning

Policy 7.121 (revised) – Extracurricular and Non-Instructional Duties

Policy 10.111 (revised) – Student Transfers Within Pitt County Schools

Ms. Jill Camnitz asked that Policy 7.014 Conflict of Interest be pulled and discussed at the next Policy Committee Meeting regarding the section pertaining to Board Members and would like a change made for more specific language. Chair Peaden asked that Attorney Sonnenberg pull this policy and bring it up for discussion at the next Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Forbes then moved, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, that the new and revised policies listed above, with the exception of Policy 7.014, be approved by the Board as presented. Ms. Mary Williams asked that we make sure the Graduation Procedures are tied into Policy 4.103 – Crowd Control at School Sponsored Activities with Attorney Sonnenberg responding this will indeed be the case. A vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

Under Comments by the Superintendent, Dr. Emory complimented the Child Nutrition Department on their work stating they do an awesome job.

Dr. Emory shared that in the new consolidated data received, we have an additional 12% reduction in our Dropout Rate, though there were some increases in a few areas.

Superintendent Emory shared with the Board that since the documentary, “Big Hits, Broken Dreams”, by CNN had aired, we have received calls from all across the country and reflected that this process is happening in all our high schools. She complimented Athletic Director Ron Butler and Public Information Officer Heather

Mayo for the outstanding work they have done on this project though this was not mentioned in the documentary.

Dr. Emory stated that in a meeting Monday with a representative from a local business who is looking at the Twilight Academy to make a substantial donation, the executive commented that the documentary went a long way with folks knowing about Greenville.

Chair Peaden commented that a guidance counselor at North Pitt High School shared that 60 students will possibly be graduating with 21 credits. He also thanked the folks that hopefully will provide a car this year for the Teacher of the Year Ceremony if the legal aspects can be put in place.

Bishop Ralph Love stated that he and his wife thank everyone for the beautiful flowers and cards sent after the recent death of his father-in-law.

Mr. Benjie Forrest stated that the comments from Mr. Cowin reveal that we are still amidst a storm, but we are encouraged by our County Commissioners who let us know issues early and work together not to eliminate any live bodies in our schools.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated the documentary was great. He also commented that he had spoken to Dr. Katy Walsh who will come to speak to the Board to explain athletic trainers and their roles in sports.

Mr. Kenny also thanked the high school principals for their input in preparing the Procedures for Graduation. He stated it's great that the dropout rate is decreasing and though long-term suspensions are up, sometimes it's necessary to remove a student from a classroom.

Mr. Kenny also congratulated the Patrick Searcy family as Patrick was selected as the Employee of the Month and his wife, Amy, recently became Nationally Board Certified. He also stated he had visited Eastern Elementary and commented on the great job Ms. Kirkland, Ms. Washington and Mr. Douglas were doing – as he had direct contact with them during his visit. Mr. Kenny also stopped by Farmville Middle School, and Mr. Kato took him on a tour where several activities were taking place. He added that he was impressed with the principal, staff and students.

Ms. Christine Waters thanked Ms. Jean Woolard for attending the meeting. She shared that she was unable to attend the entire Board Retreat last month, but felt it was a worthwhile event.

Mr. Marc Whichard thanked the teachers and principals in Pitt County Schools, stating they work hard to make good things happen.

Mr. Worth Forbes thanked Mr. Ron Butler for his hard work behind the scenes for the documentary.

Ms. Mary Williams thanked Ms. Woolard and several staff members for their reports during the meeting and stated she also was thankful for the Retreat and felt the need

for a couple more. In mentioning the documentary, she stated Dr. Gupta is one of her favorite people and that we should always remember the Waller family.

Ms. Jennifer Little congratulated the Nationally Board Certified Teachers and thanked Ms. Jackson for her extra effort in their recognition. She thanked Mr. Butler for his extra effort in helping get things in place for the documentary. Lastly, Ms. Little commented that Ms. Jean Woolard when approached, is a hard worker and concerned over issues brought to her attention.

Ms. Barbara Owens discussed the School Improvement Plans placed in their packets and added that Ms. Olmsted had done a really great job. She stated she attended the Dropout Prevention Committee Meeting and added it was one of those meetings when you want to say “WOW!!!” Ms. Owens quoted a comment she heard regarding Project Equal – “Students don’t want to come, and then they don’t want to leave.”, which says it all.

Bishop Ralph Love moved, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, that the Board go into Closed Session to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or hear or investigate a complaint, charge or grievance by or against a public officer or employee. [N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a) (6)] Motion was unanimous. Time was 9:22 P. M.

Upon returning to Open Session with no further business to discuss, Mr. Sean Kenny moved, second by Mr. Marc Whichard, that the Board adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Time was 9:45 P. M.

Respectively Submitted,

Mr. Billy Peaden, Chair

Dr. Beverly Emory, Secretary